

To Whom It may Concern:

Deaf People should have access to televised information and entertainment, just like everyone else. Closed captions make television programs accessible to my Deaf friends and family. Closed captioning is an essential part of any television program. If each individual consumer who uses a telephone can pay a few cents to provide Relay Services nationwide, the vast resources of the entertainment industry can provide the same access to the Deaf Community.

The law requiring closed captioning was passed in 1996. The FCC established closed captioning rules in 1998. The rules required closed captioning to be increased gradually over 8 years. Since January 2006, 100% of all new television programs must be captioned, with some exceptions. Programming of any type should not be an exception.

Today, closed captions are not too difficult or too expensive. No program should be on television without closed captions!

Deaf people cannot watch television programs without closed captions. As a person with Deaf family members, I am fully aware of the burdens placed on family members when closed captioning is not provided. With closed captions, access to information, resources, social commentary, entertainment, cultural references live debates, cultural changes, and a host of other topics provides the Deaf Community with continued bi-lingual and bi-cultural exposure which we all know is an issue in Deaf Education. This is a much bigger issue than just providing closed captioning. Look at the big picture! See beyond your nose!!

The FCC must support deaf and hard of hearing consumers and must enforce closed captioning rules!

Sincerely,
Helene Gilbert